Bridgway House,

NOTTINGHAM.

8th. March 1918.

To The Chairman and Members of

THE WEST BRIDGFORD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

I have now the honour of presenting to you my Annual Report for the year 1917.

The serious War conditions which prevailed at the beginning of the year still exist, and the end of the greatest War in human history is not yet in sight.

Every living person in this Country has been and is still affected more or less by the War, and customs and habits which have existed for years, have had to undergo unlooked for changes. Many Questions of Public Health have been postponed until after the War. These concern the welfare and health of the industrial worker, the building of many thousands of Workmen's Cottages, the extension and improvement of the National Insurance Act, the unification of the Public Medical Services, the question of a State Medical Service and many other questions of great importance.

On 28th. December last, the Local Government Board issued a Circular to all Medical Officers of Health, from which I take the following Extract :-

> "The Board would again suggest that, owing to the absence "of many Medical Officers of Health on War Service, and "having regard to the continued necessity for strict economy "in the use of paper and in demands on printing establishments "interim reports only should be made for the year 1917, and "that many details usually inserted in the annual reports, "such as description of district, particulars of water "supplies, sewerage, sewage disposal, etc., should be "omitted. The reports should be confined to essential and "urgent matters which have affected the public health during "the year, especially any matters arising from or connected "with the war, outbreaks of infectious disease, and measures "for maternity and child welfare, together with any "exceptional administrative measure taken or recommended by "the Medical Officer of Health. They should preferably be "typewritten, but, if printed, covers and blank sheets "should be dispensed with as far as possible.

Acting on these instructions, my Report will only deal with these questions, leaving out all other matters which might have an interest for your Board. It will deal chiefly with the question of Population, vital statistics and infectious diseases and will be little more than a resume of the Quarterly Reports I have presented to you during the year.

POPULATION. At Midsummer last there were 3610 houses in the Parish; of these 37 were unoccupied. This leaves 3,573 houses in occupation. Of the 37 empty houses, 31 were on the Musters Road district and 6 in the Lady Bay district. There has never been so few empty houses as these figures represent. Within the last two weeks this number has been very considerably reduced.

Reckoning, as in former years, four inhabitants to each occupied house, we get a population of 14,292. These figures are only approximate, as the War must have affected the population. In my last year's report I remarked that " The population will remain somewhat problematical until the next Census is taken", and this is still true. Last year's statistics were based on a net approximate population of 13,822. There are five new houses since then and thirty fewer empty houses, making 35 in all. Reckoning four inhabitants to each would increase the population by 140 for the year. 13,822 plus 140 = 13,962, and it is upon these latter figures that I base my vital statistics.

(Since writing these remarks, it is satisfactory to know that a number of large residences on the north side of Melton Road - between Loughborough and Musters Roads - which have been empty for a long time, have, within the last month, nearly all been let.)

VITAL STATISTICS.

DEATHS. 111 deaths were registered during the year; of these 48 were males and 63 were females. The number of deaths in 1916 was 102, and for 1915 the number was 112.

The Monthly distribution was as follows -

January	... ...	11 deaths.
February	... ...	7 "
March	... ...	17 "
April	... ...	11 "
May	... ...	11 "
June	... ...	8 "
July	... ...	9 "
August	... ...	6 "
September	... ...	4 "
October	... ...	5 "
November	... ...	10 "
December	... ...	12 "
		111

The Quarterly distribution was as follows -

1st. Quarter	...	35 deaths.
2nd. Quarter	...	30 "
3rd. Quarter	...	19 "
4th. Quarter	...	27 "
		111

Of the total deaths -

7 were under the age of one year.

52	were	over	60	years	of	age	-	47	per cent.
33	"	"	70	"	"	"	-	30	" "
18	"	"	80	"	"	"	-	16	" "
2	"	"	90	"	"	"	-		

These figures show that the Parish still maintains its reputation as a locality where many of the inhabitants attain extreme old age.

The chief causes of death were as follows -

Consumption	6	cases.
Diseases of the Lungs other than Consumption, e.g. Pneumonia, Bronchitis, etc.	14	"
Heart Disease	13	"
Cerebral Disease	4	"
Renal Disease	4	"
Cancer	21	"
Tubercular Diseases, other than Consumption	6	"
Accidents and Injuries	5	"
Infectious Diseases	2	"
Old Age	18	"
Pre-maturity	1	"

There was one uncertified death. Six inquests were held, which was quite a large number for your Parish. There were four deaths from accidents and one suicide. Four soldiers died in the Eastern Command Military Hospital; of these, there was a death from consumption, another from pleurisy with effusion, one from Kidney Disease and one from Gunshot wounds.

There was one death from Scarlet Fever and one from diphtheria.

The gross death rate for the year was 8 per 1,000.

There were 19 deaths of residents who died away from home, while 8 deaths occurred of visitors to the Parish. These figures give a net death-rate of 8·74 per 1,000.

INFANT MORTALITY.

Seven infants died before completing their first year of existence. This is about 50 % less than usual. The rate is 58 per 1,000 children born.

BIRTHS. 120 births were registered - 59 boys and 61 girls. The number of births was only 9 more than the number of deaths. This is very unsatisfactory, and shews that the population of

the Parish was for 1917 nearly stable.

One satisfactory feature is that there was only one illegitimate birth. Evidently "War Babies", of whom much was heard and talked of at the beginning of the War, do not exist in West Bridgford.

NOTIFICATION OF BIRTHS. Of the 120 children born, the births of only 62 of these were notified. 23 were notified by Doctors, 34 by Midwives and 5 by the parents. Only just over 50 % of the total births were notified. This fact, as far as your Parish is concerned, is therefore a comparative failure.

The birth rate is 8·6 per 1,000. Thus the total number of births as well as the birth rate, are much the lowest in the records of the Parish. The birth rate and the death rate as near as possible balance each other - a very unsatisfactory state of affairs indeed. The rate (8·6) compares with a rate of 14·9 for 1916 and with a mean rate of 24 per 1,000 for the 15 Urban Districts of the County.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

87 cases were notified as follows:-

Scarlet Fever	15 cases.
Diphtheria	9 "
Measles	55 "
Erysipelas	3 "
Tubercular Diseases	3 "
Cerebro Spinal Fever	2 "
	87

15 cases were notified during the first Quarter, 23 cases during the second Quarter, 9 during the third and 40 cases during the last Quarter.

The notification of Measles became compulsory on 1st. January 1916. From this date to 31st. December 1917, 233 cases have been notified.

As only one case is notified from each house, and as there

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were many instances of several children in the same house being affected, and, further, as many cases occurred which were not notified at all, one has some idea of the prevalence of this ailment during the past two years. For over two years the Parish has never been free from Measles. In my long experience of medical practice, I have never known of such a long drawn-out epidemic. Fortunately, there have been no deaths, although many of the cases have been of a severe nature.

Parents now recognise that Measles is a disease not to be trifled with. The children affected are now treated with greater care. In this respect notification has, I think, done good.

At the beginning of the present year, measles was so prevalent that I thought it advisable to prolong the Christmas Holidays by closing the Infant Departments of the two public schools for one week longer. This had some effect in lessening the number of cases, but it failed to stamp out the disease altogether, for there are still a great many cases in the Parish.

Most of the children susceptible to measles must by this time, I think, have been affected, and I look now for a speedy ending to the epidemic.

CEREBRO SPINAL FEVER. This is the only other infectious disease which calls for comment. Two cases were notified - one a soldier who recovered, the other a well-known lady in the Parish who unfortunately died. How she contracted the disease will, I fear, always remain a mystery.

The Local Government Board has just issued a uniform form of Certificate or Notification by Medical Practitioners for all notifiable diseases. I have ordered 50 of these new book of forms and distributed some of them amongst the local medical

practitioners. The notification of infectious diseases will be simplified and the certificates of Notification can now be sent by post with a half-penny postage instead of by letter post.

DISINFECTION.

In cases of infectious diseases, particularly of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria, fumigation of the room occupied by the patients has been carefully carried out by your Sanitary Staff. The work must be skilfully done, as I never get any complaints.

SEWAGE PURIFICATION. REFUSE DESTRUCTOR, ETC. ETC.

The work connected with the practical sanitation of the Parish has been carried on under most trying and difficult circumstances. Night-soil and scavenging work is obnoxious, and it is not to be wondered at that the demand for labour of a pleasanter character with high wages has depleted your Staff, and has made it most difficult for Mr. Pare to get and keep a staff of efficient workmen. The demands of the Army have increased the difficulty.

Your Council must be prepared to inaugurate some drastic alterations in relation to the night-soil work and the emptying of the sewage tanks - two forms of labour which must be repugnant to all decent working men.

ALLOTMENTS. In December 1916 the Council received a communication from the Government requesting them to take over all vacant building land, set it out for War Allotments, and let it to persons willing to cultivate it. Before March of 1917 allotments had been let to the number of 195. Since that time further powers have been given under which land has been taken that was in cultivation, but which it was thought would produce a better return in the hands of

Allotment holders. On this land a further 220 allotments have been set out, and let.

In addition to this the Council have allocated a portion of the Sewage Farm to 18 Permanent Allotments of 500 yards each.

ROADS. Some of the roads in the Parish are getting into a bad state of disrepair, more particularly Bridgford Road and parts of Musters Road. Albert Road, Holme Road, and some parts of Trent Boulevard also show signs of wear and tear. As soon as the war is over, and circumstances permit, a considerable expenditure will be required to restore these and other roads to their pre-war conditions.

Quite recently your Highway Committee considered the question of reducing the number of trees in the main thoroughfares of the Parish. My opinion on this question is very emphatic - it is that on some of the roads every alternate tree should be removed, and that those left standing should be so pruned annually that they should not interfere with the sunshine, or the circulation of air around the houses. Lack of labour again plays its part here, and the question must remain in abeyance until peace has been declared.

These are a few of the questions which will face your Council and demand its earliest and thorough consideration as soon as the Allies have proved vistorious. Reconstruction will then be the "Cry" and in no field will there be greater opportunity for re-organisation and improvement than in the protection of the public against disease and poverty.

West Bridgford must maintain its reputation as one of the pleasantest and most healthful residential districts in the Kingdom, and it is up to your Council to see that this high state of efficiency will be maintained. It is in no sense of flattery that I say that in these and in all other